



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

~~CONSUMER PROTECTION AND~~ ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Insect and Rodent Control Branch

Room 313, 3384 Peachtree Road, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30326

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION

February 26, 1970

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
School of Medicine, Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Professor Lederberg:

Your letter of February 16, 1970, has been sent to me for reply. The initial decision to inaugurate an Aedes aegypti eradication program in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands following the dengue outbreak in the Caribbean in 1963 was based primarily on an international commitment of this country to do its share in the hemispheric program to eradicate the yellow fever mosquito as explained in several of the accompanying reprints.

The decision to terminate the program was based on budgetary considerations as explained in the 2 page Aedes aegypti mosquito eradication program Curtailment Report dated September 26, 1968.

You may be interested in reading more about the international ramifications of the program, including the Senegal epidemic of 1965, in two WHO Bulletins: No. 36(1) pp 1-180, 1967 and No. 36(4) pp 519-702, 1967, and the May 1969 issue of "American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene."

With regard to the absence of yellow fever in Asia, Dr. Fred Soper, one of the world's authorities on yellow fever, has felt that the absence of this disease in East Africa was one of the cardinal reasons it was never carried by sailing boats to southeast Asia with its hundreds of millions of susceptible people and an abundance of two good mosquito vectors--Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus whereas the disease was repeatedly introduced into the Americas from West Africa where it is endemic. Dr. Soper has pointed out that in these days of jet airplanes, it may be only a matter of time until either an infected mosquito or a person with yellow fever virus circulating in his blood is carried to some southeast Asia country to start an epidemic of yellow fever there. These are the reasons for the strict requirement that travelers to southeast Asia from yellow fever countries in Africa or the Americas must have a valid yellow fever vaccination and for the current interest in airplane disinsection. We appreciate your interest in this program.

Sincerely yours,

Harry D. Pratt

✕ Harry D. Pratt, Ph.D.
Chief, Insect and Rodent Control Branch